

UNCLASSIFIED

Current Class: [REDACTED]
Current Handling: n/a
Document Number: 1976BUENOS05950

9/14/76

Page: 1

Channel: n/a

Case Number: 200000044

I 145

<<<<.>>>>

PAGE 01 BUENOS 05950 141349Z

42
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 ARAE-00 L-03 SSO-00

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 INRE-00 /025 W

103517

O 141310Z SEP 76
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7067

[REDACTED] BUENOS AIRES 5950

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, CASC, AR
SUBJECT: JEHOVAH WITNESSES

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS
Margaret P. Grafeld, Director
() Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s):
Classify: () In Part () In Full ~~DECLASSIFIED~~
() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to
Date Declassify on Reason

REF: STATE 224228

1. CLOSURE OF WITNESSES OFFICES NOW TAKING PLACE THROUGHOUT COUNTRY IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH NEW DECREE NUMBER 1867 DATED AUGUST 31, 1976. FOLLOWING IS INFORMAL TRANSLATION OF TEXT: "AS THE RELIGIOUS GROUP "JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES" OR "THE WATCH TOWER AND BIBLE TRACT SOCIETY", IN SPITE OF BEING REFUSED INSCRIPTION IN THE REGISTRY OF NON-CATHOLIC AND DISSIDENT WORSHIP OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND WORSHIP, CONTINUES ITS PROSELYTIZING AND SEPARATIST ACTIVITIES IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE NATIONAL TERRITORY, AND CONSIDERING: THAT THE GROUP IN QUESTION MAINTAINS PRINCIPLES WHICH ARE CONTRARY TO THE NATION AND BASIC INSTITUTIONS OF THE STATE AND FUNDAMENTAL PRECEPTS OF ITS LEGISLATION; THAT THE FREEDOM OF WORSHIP ALLOWED BY THE ARTICLES 14 AND 20 OF THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION IS OF COURSE LIMITED IN THE SENSE THAT RELIGIOUS IDEAS MUST NOT LEAD TO A VIOLATION OF LAWS OR ATTEMPT AGAINST THE PUBLIC ORDER, THE NATIONAL SECURITY, MORAL AND GOOD CUSTOMS; THAT THE CHURCHGOERS OF THE MENTIONED SECT, IN OPEN VIOLATION OF ARTICLE 21 OF THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION AND ARTICLES 4 AND 11 OF THE ACT 17531, REFUSE TO CARRY OUT THE OBLIGATIONS WHICH THESE LEGAL TEXTS IMPLY. FOR THAT

Current Class: [REDACTED]

Page: 1

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

Current Class: [REDACTED]
Current Handling: n/a
Document Number: 1976BUENOS05950

Page: 2

Channel: n/a

Case Number: 200000044

[REDACTED]
PAGE 02 BUENOS 05950 141349Z

REASON, AND USING THE FACULTIES CONFERRED BY
ARTICLE 4 OF THE STATUTE FOR THE PROCESS OF NATIONAL
REORGANIZATION

THE PRESIDENT OF THE ARGENTINE NATION RESOLVES:

ARTICLE 1: THE ACTIVITIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ASSOCIATION
"JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES" OR "THE WATCH TOWER AND BIBLE
TRACT ASSOCIATION" AND THAT OF THE GROUPS, ENTITIES OR
ASSOCIATION DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY RELATED TO SUCH
ASSOCIATION ARE PROHIBITED IN ALL OF THE TERRITORY OF
THE NATION.

ARTICLE 2: ALSO PROHIBITED ARE: A) THE NEWSPAPERS,
MAGAZINES AND ALL PUBLICATION WHICH OSTENSIBLY OR HIDDENLY
CONTRIBUTES TO BROADCAST THE SAID DOCTRINE, B) ACTS OF
PROSELYTIZING AND ACTS OF INDOCTRINATION.

ARTICLE 3: ALL OF THE HEADQUARTERS IN WHICH MEETINGS
OF THE ABOVEMENTIONED ASSOCIATION ARE HELD, AS WELL
AS THE PLACES IN WHICH PRINTING, DISTRIBUTION OR
SALE OF MATERIAL MENTIONED IN ARTICLE 2, SHALL BE SHUT
DOWN.

ARTICLE 4: INSTRUCTIONS TO COMPLY WITH THIS DECREE
WILL BE GIVEN THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR.

ARTICLE 5: SERVE NOTICE, ENTER, GIVE TO THE NATIONAL
OFFICE OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRY AND FILE."

DECREE NO. 1867

SIGNED: JORGE VIDELA

2. EFFECT OF DECREE HAS BEEN TO CLOSE WITNESSES'S
EVERY OFFICE AND PLACE OF WORSHIP IN ARGENTINA AND
TO DENY WITNESSES' ACCESS TO PRINTINGPRESSES AND
SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS. ALL RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES HAVE
BEEN CURTAILED.

3. WITNESSES HAVE RETAINED LOCAL ATTORNEY DR.
MARCELO FABRIS, TEL.: 45-2700 BUENOS AIRES AND ARE
TAKING ACTION IN FEDERAL COURTS TO HAVE DECREE
DECLARED UNCONSTITUTIONAL. WITNESSES BELIEVE THAT
CASE WILL EVENTUALLY GO TO SUPREME COURT FOR RESOLUTION.

4. COPY DECREE 1867 FORWARDED DEPT. THIS DATE.
WITNESSES ARE ALSO PROVIDING EMBASSY WITH COPY OF
LEGAL ARGUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED TO COURTS IN THEIR

[REDACTED]
Current Class: [REDACTED]

Page: 2

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

Current Class: [REDACTED]
Current Handling: n/a
Document Number: 1976BUENOS05950

Page: 3

Channel: n/a

Case Number: 200000044

[REDACTED]

PAGE 03 BUENOS 05950 141349Z

BEHALF. ARGUMENTS WITH EMBASSY COMMENT WILL BE
TRANSMITTED TO DEPT. AS SOON AS RECEIVED.
HILL

[REDACTED]

NNN

Current Class: [REDACTED]

Page: 3

UNCLASSIFIED